

February 27, 2023
Zoe Jensen

In Support of:

S.B. 4: AN ACT CONCERNING CONNECTICUT'S PRESENT AND FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS

Good afternoon Senator Moore, Representative Luxenberg, and the distinguished members of the Housing Committee:

My name is Zoe Jensen and I live in New Haven.

I am testifying in strong support of S.B. 4: An Act Concerning Connecticut's Present and Future Housing Needs. Connecticut has an opportunity to make real progress towards fixing the housing crisis with this bill. Connecticut can become a leader in housing justice for the rest of the country and we need to start now. There are a lot of powerful and innovative pieces of this legislation to really move us in that direction. Everyone deserves safe, healthy and affordable housing and it's time our laws reflect that!

In New Haven, we have a massive housing crisis. Community members who have lived here their whole lives are kicked out of the city due to higher and higher rents prioritizing Yale students who, in the majority, leave right after graduation. These students leave behind extremely high rents that create barriers for anyone who wants to invest their lives in this city. As someone who lives in New Haven out of love for the city and state, not due to college, I want more people to be able to live and work here. The only way for that is for the basic cost of living, the bulk of which is housing, to be attainable for people beyond the most wealthy. If Connecticut wants to address its brain drain, support local economies, and house unhoused people, we must ensure affordable housing -- SB4 is a step in that direction.

Housing is a human right. Shelter is a basic need of humans, and we cannot deny that. The Winter Eviction Moratorium, tenant protections, bill caps, and environmental measures are essential steps in cementing housing as a human right. Although more can be done to strengthen the bill (i.e., the rent cap including good cause eviction to prevent unfair evictions, the Winter Eviction Moratorium including enforcement, and a tenant rights governmental agency), this bill will save the lives of people across our state.

We have a chance to put a real dent in the housing crisis with this legislation. The things included in this bill will really improve the quality of life of our communities. I urge the Committee to have the courage to make the right choice and pass S.B. 4 An Act Concerning Connecticut's Present and Future Housing Needs.

Thank you,

NAME

TOWN/CITY, CT